



# FOOD & FRIENDS

**Impact Report  
2022**





# OUR VISION

Our vision is a community where everyone who is seriously ill has the nourishment they need to manage their illness.

Food & Friends is built on a simple premise: anyone can get sick and everyone can help.

- We believe that everyone managing a serious illness should have the nourishment they need to improve their health and enhance their quality of life, so we prepare and provide specialized meals that are designed to meet the medical and dietary needs of each of our clients.
- We believe in nourishing both the body and the mind, so our meals are delivered by caring community members who also help end the sense of social isolation that can result from a serious illness, particularly for the homebound.
- We believe that no one is immune from illness, regardless of demographics or economic status.



# OUR MISSION

To improve the lives and health of people with HIV/AIDS, cancer and other serious illnesses that limit their ability to provide nourishment for themselves by:

- preparing and delivering specialized meals and groceries that are designed to meet the medical and dietary needs of each of our clients;
- providing nutritional counseling and wellness education that enhances our clients' quality of life; and
- creating a strong sense of community for both our clients and volunteers that reduces the social isolation that often comes with serious illnesses and provides meaningful opportunities for neighbors to help neighbors in need.





# Leadership Message

Dear Friends,

2022 was a year that encouraged our aspirations, took us on bold new paths, and filled us with gratitude for the community. It was a year where our limits were tested, and as we stretched, grew, and evolved, we stayed true to the same mission we have had since our founding in 1988. We are so thankful for you, and thousands of our neighbors, who made it possible for us to provide medically tailored meals to 4,891 individuals in need, our highest annual total.

Our diverse volunteers, staff, board, and supporters all play a role in delivering our mission every day. As you know, Food & Friends is a place where the community unites, and bridges divides, because we know everyone who is seriously ill should have the nourishment they need to deal with their illness. We are proud of our deep roots in the region, nurtured for decades. In a year that saw demand for our services increase by 30%, when the community needed our help more than ever before, we were there because of you.

There are now nearly 200 health care provider agencies who refer adults and children with life-challenging illnesses to receive food that heals. The increase in demand for our services came at the same time as the rising food prices that we've all experienced. With your help, we stood strong with our community and empowered many of our most vulnerable residents to maintain their health and dignity during times of urgent need.

Together, we home delivered 1.59 million medically tailored meals to almost 5,000 of our friends, neighbors, and loved ones as they faced illnesses like cancer, diabetes, HIV/AIDS, Parkinsons, and many more. This would never have been possible without your empathy and generosity. Because of your generosity in time and support, we are positioned to continue to respond to unforeseen circumstances with strength. Our building is teeming with activity, boxes of produce and groceries are piled high, and our space is nearing capacity to produce enough medically tailored meals. We are making plans to expand our space to continue to meet the need in the coming years.

We could not carry out our mission without the thousands of volunteers who help us prepare, package, and deliver our meals, and our generous supporters who include Food & Friends in their philanthropy to financially support our essential operations. Thank you so much for helping us rise to every challenge.





# Program Success & Rising Needs

Amid our highest-ever demand for medically tailored meals, high food costs, and major supply chain challenges, we carried out our mission with distinction in 2022 because of your support. At the beginning of the year, we were delivering about 95,000 meals per month. By the end of the year, we were home-delivering 158,000 meals per month, an increase of 67 percent. Overall, in 2022, we served 4,891 adults and children with serious illnesses, thanks to you.

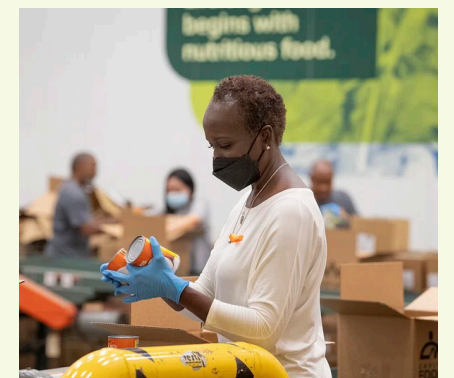
The health impact of our work was especially strong in 2022, with 84 percent of individuals we served reporting improved health outcomes. Many people delayed regular doctor visits during the pandemic, so we experienced a continual surge in new referrals that lasted for the duration of the year.



As our communities continue to recover from the aftereffects of the pandemic, Food & Friends is playing a significant and measurable role in confronting health inequities and improving social determinants of health for individuals with life-challenging illnesses. 61 percent of our clients identify as Black or African American, and 13 percent identify as Latino, Latina or Latinx.

Our work reaches families at home, where they make their most important nutrition decisions. Nutrition education not only benefits our primary clients, but also their family members. 26 percent of the freshly

prepared meals we home delivered were sent to the children of individuals we serve, and the family members or close relatives and friends responsible for their care. With your help—our caring donors, partners, and corporate sponsors, we met our client needs and attained higher metrics on satisfaction, including stronger health outcomes than prior years.



Food & Friends was started in 1988 by a small group of volunteers, and they remain at the heart of our mission. An amazing 2,974 volunteers helped prepare, pack and deliver meals, an increase from last year, thanks to the renewed engagement of corporate groups. Volunteers are the “friends” element of our mission. They are adored by our neighbors, and they do more than prepare, package, and deliver meals. They also help us deliver special birthday cakes, Thanksgiving feasts, and holiday gifts for the kids on our service.

Excellence and accountability are core values and a foundation for our food safety. Food & Friends was presented with the Director's Award from the DC Department of Health. This prestigious award is only given to 'restaurants' that had exemplary food safety inspection reports throughout the year. The award was presented to our Executive Chef Rasheed Abdurrahman at the Food Safety Conference in September.